



April 12, 2013

Deanna O'Donnell
Presiding Administrative Judge
Parma Municipal Court
5555 Powers Blvd.
Parma, Ohio 44129

Dear Ms. O'Donnell:

We are in receipt of your letter dated April 5, 2013. In your letter, you requested the names and case numbers of the 45 cases we brought to your attention, as well as a copy of our report. While we do not feel it is appropriate to divulge the names of the 45 individuals at this time, we are more than happy to share our methodology with you so that you may review your own records.

We used the following methodology to obtain information on individuals who may have been imprisoned for failure to pay fines as a result of warrants ordered by the Parma Municipal Court:

- First, we requested the Parma City Jail booking report from July 15, 2012 – August 31, 2012.
- We then analyzed the booking report for individuals whose booking report charge(s) stated "Warrant – FTPF."
- We then crosschecked individuals with warrants for "FTPF" with the Parma Municipal Court's online dockets.
- We reviewed the online dockets to verify that warrants were issued and recalled around the booking and release dates listed in the booking report. The online dockets included entries which explicitly stated, "Warrant issued for FAILURE TO PAY FINES on XX/XX/XXXX (*no emphasis added*)."
- We then reviewed the online dockets for entries indicating whether a hearing on ability to pay was held, if the individual was offered community service in lieu of fines, if payment plans were entered, or if the individual was credited for time served.

We found no evidence that any of the 45 individuals were provided a formal indigency hearing as required by § 2947.14. Further, a majority of the cases reviewed included "payment hearings" heard by Magistrate Edward J. Fink.

Please also see the enclosed copies of our report, *The Outskirts of Hope*.

We thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Christine Link
Executive Director

Jocelyn Rosnick
Policy Researcher

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